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C O N F I D E N T I A L DJIBOUTI 001003

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [DJ](#) [ER](#) [PBTS](#) [PREL](#) [SF](#)

SUBJECT: GODJ IMPATIENT FOR UNSCR ON BORDER DISPUTE WITH
ERITREA

Classified By: Amb. J. Swan for reason 1.4 (b)(d)

¶1. (C) Djiboutian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Youssouf appealed to the Ambassador Dec. 14 for the USG to support rapid consideration and adoption of a French-drafted UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) on the Djibouti-Eritrea border dispute. The draft UNSCR would establish a deadline for Eritrea to withdraw forces from the border area and cooperate on international diplomatic efforts to resolve the matter. With the upcoming holidays and new year, Youssouf said he feared the draft UNSCR could face significant further delay if it is not considered immediately.

¶2. (C) Separately, French Ambassador Dominique Descherf told us that Paris had instructed its mission in New York to circulate the draft to the full 15 Council Members last Friday, and to seek an experts meeting later this week. Descherf said the French had held off on circulating the draft in part because of negative signals from the South African delegation, which he said favors another Presidential Statement rather than a UNSCR that could lead eventually to sanctions against Eritrea. The French have demarched the SAG to seek support for the draft resolution, but Descherf did not have a read-out of the South African response. If the SAG remains opposed to a UNSCR on this issue, the French believe the best course of action may be to delay action until the new year, when Uganda replaces South Africa on the Council.

¶3. (C) Comment: The GODJ places great importance on obtaining a favorable UNSCR on the border situation. President Ismail Omar Guelleh personally addressed the council on October 23, and the Djiboutians are impatient for follow-up.
SWAN